

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L OPORTO 232

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PGOV

SUBJ: COMMUNISTS CELEBRATE SEPT 28 VICTORY AND PROTEST AGAINST FRANCO

1. COMMUNISTS IN THE NORTH COMMERATED SEPT 28 "VICTORY OVER FASCISM" WITH TWO RALLIES IN OPORTO. YEAR OLD ANNIVERSARY DATE COINCIDED WITH MOUNTING ANTI-FRANCO CAMPAIGN. PCP KICKED OFF WEEKEND ACTIVITIES SEPT 26 AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE WHERE CUNHAL MADE LATE-HOUR APPEARANCE BEFORE SOME 15,000 SUPPORTERS WHO FILLED PALACE WITH NOISE BUT NOT NUMBERS. NOTABLE ANNOUNCEMENT MADE AT RALLY WAS REOPENING OF PCP HEADQUARTERS IN FARMALICAO. RUMORED COUNTERDEMONSTRATIONS DID NOT TAKE PLACE THOUGH UNSIGNED LEAFLETS APPEARED IN OPORTO ONLY HOURS BEFORE THE RALLY CALLING CUNHAL "ASSASSIN OF MOZAMBIQUE, ANGOLA, GUINEA AND PORTUGAL." LEAFLETS URGED PORTUGUESE PEOPLE TO "DEFEND THEMSELVES" AT PCP RALLY. SOME HECKLERS GATHERED OUTSIDE PALACE BUT NO SERIOUS INCIDENTS WERE REPORTED. MORE RADICAL LEFTISTS CONTENTED THEMSELVES WITH MARCH ON SPANISH CONSULATE BUT DISPERSED AFTER POLICE AND MILITARY UNITS FIRED WARNING SALVOS.

2. SECOND ASSAULT ON SPANISH CONSULATE FOLLOWED SEPT 28 VICTORY RALLY ORGANIZED BY CMLP, OCMLP AND ORPCML. IN ANTICIPATION OF ATTACK, CONSULATE EFFECTS HAD BEEN REMOVED BY POLICE HOURS EARLIER. LEFTIST MARCHERS SUCCEEDED IN BREAKING THOUGH LINES OF POLICE AND MILITARY WHOSE WARNING SHOTS THIS TIME WENT UNHEEDED. CONSULATE OFFICE WAS COMPLETELY TRASHED. REMAINING EFFECTS WERE STOLEN OR
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BURNED.

3. COMMENT: THERE WAS LITTLE DOUBT SPANISH CONSULATE WOULD BE ASSAULTED AND TRASHED AFTER EARLIER DESTRUCTION OF SPANISH EMBASSY IN LISBON. IN SUCH CASES OPORTO FOLLOWS THE LEAD SET IN CAPITAL. ON THE OTHER HAND, ANNOUNCED REOPENING OF PCP HEADQUARTERS IN FARMALICAO SIGNALS NEW ATTEMPT BY COMMUNISTS TO KEEP THE POLITICAL POT BOILING IN THE NORTHERN COUNTRYSIDE. PCP COULD FOLLOW SUIT WITH SOME FORTY OTHER INSTALLATIONS STILL ABANDONED.

PENNER

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